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FALSE PROPHETS UNMASKED;

A

S E R M O N,

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S E R M O N.

MATT. vii. 15. 16.

Beware of FALSE PROPHETS, which come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: Ye shall know them by their fruits.

THE manner in which our blessed LORD discharged the duties of his extraordinary prophetic function, is astonishing in the highest degree. Even his most inveterate enemies, and their slavish officers, whose hearts were ordinarily callous to the more tender feelings, were obliged to acknowledge, that never man spake like this man*. Conscious of his power to render all he said effectual, he not only despised the contemptible arts of the Sophist and Rhetorician, but he even deigned not to use many of the more laudable means of persuasion, ever sacred to the cause of truth, religion, and humanity. While he communicated the most sublime truths, and inculcated the most important precepts; while he restored the purity of the divine law, and unmasked the characters of those, who had dared to adulterate and debase it, by their false comments and idle traditions:—He does all this

* JOHN vii. 46.

this in a manner, worthy of a God; and in a language sublime, though simple; full of noble energy, though plain; and accommodated to the lowest capacity, at the same time that it served to demonstrate the dignity of his own character, and the grandeur of his own mission.—Of all this we have a pregnant instance and convincing proof in his sermon on the Mount; and particularly in this short passage of it, now before us: *Beware of false Prophets, who come unto you in sheep's cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.*

Our blessed Lord, being about to erect a spiritual kingdom, extensive as the habitable globe, and lasting as the sun, upon the foundation of his own approaching resurrection, was well aware, that Hell from beneath would not only rouse itself, but would also stir up its earthly allies, to defeat, if possible, or, at least to retard as much as possible, the execution of his eternal and benevolent design. All events, whether respecting that kingdom, or the kingdom of providence, subordinate to it, though concealed behind the awful and impenetrable vail of futurity, are naked and open unto him with whom we have to do. He not only saw well the scenes of perfidy and cruelty that were then acting against his person and interests, but he clearly *foresaw*, that in every age, all the teeming sources of force and fraud would be exhausted by rebellious angels and wicked men, rather than that they should be wanting to gratify their native malignity against a design so salutary and glorious. As Satan, with his bands, can appear and act but in two capital characters only, in that of the *roaring Lion*, seeking

ing to devour, and in that of the *old Serpent*, attempting to deceive; so our Lord, like a wise and compassionate friend, cautions his disciples to the end of the world, against the fatal consequences of being overcome by these passions which either character is suited to inspire.

Foreseeing, and even decreeing to permit, that that the son of violence should set upon, and attempt to destroy the faithful servants of God in every future generation, he warns them of their danger, and directs them to the proper means of eluding it. “Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.—But fear not them who kill the body.” He fortifies their minds against all the effects of a timid and dastardly temper, by holding up to their view, objects infinitely more tremendous than racks and torture. “Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell.”

He also foretold that Satan would add craft to cruelty. Knowing, that, as good men are ordinarily least under the influence of gloomy suspicion, his church, constituted in all ages of such amiable characters, would be greatly exposed to all the dismal effects of a too easy credulity, and of an unsuspecting uprightness of heart: He therefore cautions them to be hourly on their guard against the arts of all those who lye in wait to deceive. “Beware of false Prophets, who come unto you in sheep’s cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

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These words present to our view a most useful CAUTION, and an infallible TEST.

First;—We are presented with an important Caution. “Beware of false Prophets, which come unto you in sheep’s cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

In this kind admonition, two things require our attention.--The DUTY enjoined, and the OBJECTS ascertained, to which the duty specially refers.

1. The Duty which the divine authority enjoins on all Christians, *Beware*. The word, so translated, is too expressive to be exactly answered by any one word in our language; “Look before you, behind you, and on each hand, where it is possible danger may arise. You pass through an enemy’s country, where it is necessary that you should reconnoitre every wood, and every copse, every mountain, and every valley, lest any ambuscade should be laid for you. You must examine characters, however flattering; and try the spirits, let their pretences be ever so fair. Satan, and men capable of Satanical address, are your enemies. You are not ignorant of his or their devices. The versatile arts of your enemies mark out your duty, and are a forceable motive to urge its performance. Be therefore on your guard, and fortify yourselves against all the wiles of your open and masked enemies, by all the ways and means which God has appointed and approves.”

This duty every man owes to himself. Ministers are indeed set for the defence of the Gospel, and are as watchmen to give faithful warning: But even the most faithful and diligent discharge of *their* duty, will not, cannot supercede the necessity every

every man is laid under to acquit himself of *his own*. If ministers be unfaithful in the trust reposed in them, they will not go to Hell in the room of those, whom, having been off their own guard, they may have fatally betrayed into the jaws of perdition. Magistrates are the guardians of our natural, civil, and religious rights. But the ordinance of magistracy does not supercede the obligation every man, as a moral agent and accountable being, is indispensably laid under to be on his guard, in his peculiar station, lest he and his fellow-citizens should become the dupes of artful men, and be deprived of those privileges, without which he and others cannot discharge the duties which they owe to God and their own consciences. GOD is greater than man; and conscience is a more awful tribunal than the most solemn courts of puny mortals.

This Caution is not delivered in the stile of those precepts which more immediately regard private life. Those are announced in the singular number: "THOU shalt have no other Gods before me," &c. But this being published in the plural, seems to indicate, that societies, as such, are to guard their *common* interests, by all the ways and means that are competent to societies, according to their different constitutions, and the different ends of their erection. Churches being societies, erected for purposes purely spiritual, are to watch over their spiritual privileges, by a due subjection to all the ordinances of Christ, and the due use of those weapons, which *are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God* †. Civil societies, as such, ought to guard their civil privileges

leges by all the means that are lawful in themselves, and agreeable to the constitutions, or fundamental laws of such societies. And as churches cannot enjoy their peculiar spiritual privileges in peace, unless their members be protected in all natural and civil privileges, belonging to them as citizens; civil society ought to guard them against the attacks of all such as either openly attempt, or secretly endeavour the subversion of their natural or civil rights, whether such pests of mankind reside in, or be foreign to the society.

2. The Objects whom this Duty respects deserve to be considered. “False Prophets, who come in sheep’s clothing, but are inwardly ravening wolves.”

They are described by their names: They call themselves Prophets, and inoffensive sheep. Unhappily for them, He who gives every person his true name, calls them false Prophets, and ravening wolves in sheep’s clothing. The denominations, *prophet* and *sheep*, originally signified the public teachers, and the more private members of the church. A prophet, in the more restrained signification of the word, signifies one who, actuated by a divine impulse, predicted future events, But it is used in a more general sense, to denote any person who has a proper commission to teach the doctrines of religion in the church. A false prophet is, therefore, any person who pretending a divine commission, intrudes himself into the sacred offices of the church, and endeavours to disseminate false and pernicious doctrines among her members. Every heretic, every erroneous teacher, whatever his commission originally may have been, is therefore a false prophet; for no man can boast a divine
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commission to utter falsehood and tell lies, in the name of the Lord.

They are described by their zeal. They run before they be sent, and come before they be sent for. "Who come unto you in sheep's cloathing." Prophets, who have God's commission, are too much awed with the importance of their work, to run precipitantly upon it. When they come to any people as their public teachers, they come in consequence of a call from them. On their coming to such a people, they can say as *Peter* said to *Cornelius*, I ask for what intent ye have sent for me? On the contrary, false prophets come without any call that Heaven approves. That impulse which arises from the thirst of filthy lucre, is not the motion of the Holy Ghost; nor is induction to the benefice the call of the church,—the call that will warrant the prophet to assert his commission at the bar of conscience and common sense, and before the tribunal of God.

They are described by their assumed appearance. 'They come in sheep's cloathing.' This may refer either to their pretended office, as prophets, or to their boasted simplicity and innocence as sheep. (1) It may refer to their pretended office, as prophets. Some of the ancient prophets, obliged by the cruelty of their cotemporary princes to flee into the extensive wildernesses of Palestine and its environs, went up and down in disguise, cloathed in sheep's-skins and goats-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented;—'of whom the word was not worthy.' The false prophets, in the degenerate ages of the Jewish church, were ambitious to catch the admiration of their contemporaries

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poraries, to whose ears the fame of the ancient prophets had come. To obtain this end, though quite destitute of the spirit of these eminent personages, they attempted an imitation of their *exterior*. They wore a rough garment to deceive †, in allusion to the false prophets of *Zechariah's* age, our Lord characterises the false teachers who would arise in the Christian church. "Though ravening wolves, they shall, like their predecessors of infamous memory, imitate the exterior of saints, confessors and martyrs. Though they shall not have the smallest portion of *Elijah's* spirit, they will boast that they possess his mantle." Or (2) It may refer to their pretended simplicity and harmlessness as sheep. "Though they be ravening wolves, they shall come in the habiliments of the inoffensive sheep. They shall strive to recommend themselves to the good opinion of mankind, by all the tricks of superstition, and an overdone religious profession." Thus the clergy of New Testament Babylon are represented. "Their faces were as the faces of men; and they had hair as the hair of women,—but their teeth were as the teeth of lions ‡." Thus the whole Anti-christian kingdom is characterised; "The second beast had two horns as a lamb, but he spake as a dragon §."

They are exposed in their *real* character. "Inwardly they are ravening wolves." God searcheth the heart, and cannot be imposed upon by false appearances. He therefore assures us, that these prophets who affect the appearance of extraordinary sanctity, without being able to produce any other vouchers to prove their pretensions than the exterior

† ZECK. xiii. 4. ‡ REV. ix. 7. 8. § REV. xiii. 2.

exterior of the ancients, are false prophets and ravening wolves. They are not even permitted the less obnoxious name of *goats*. Goats are indeed a different species from the sheep, and are the ordinary scripture emblem of hypocrites,—a detested generation! but even goats are not inimical to the sheep. Hypocrites, with all their bad qualities, may live peaceably in the external communion of the visible church. But false prophets are *wolves*, naturally disposed to slaughter and blood, and can never desire to associate with the sheep, but with a view to destroy them. They are *ravening* wolves. These animals are naturally so; yet when their natural propensions receive a keenness from hunger, they will even frequent the haunts of men, rather than endure the rage of their own voracious appetites. False teachers, whose hands have been long tied up from murder, and whose mouths have been long shut, acquire a keenness to act in the character of ravening wolves, proportioned to the duration and severity of the unwelcome prohibition. Falsely imagining that they do God service by perpetrating *Paris* massacres, and by kindling *Smithfield* flames, they double their diligence when they may, in order that they may make up what was wanting when they could not, glut their wolfish appetites with blood. They are *inwardly* ravening wolves. False prophets have an inward propension to raven. As they are actuated by the lust of riches, power, and earthly grandeur, they naturally are prompt to destroy every thing that stands in their way to gratify their covetousness, their ambition, and their pride. It is madness to expect that a pompous and lucrative religion can ever be a tolerant religion; or that those who are its public teachers

teachers can ever be good members of society, when the instrument of gratifying their exorbitant passions is in real or apparent danger.

SECONDLY; The text presents us with an infallible touchstone by which we ought to try false prophets, coming in all the habiliments of true prophets, and innocent sheep. *Ye shall know them by their fruits.* Human knowledge is principally acquired by the examination of effects. Few, if any, objects are known to us, *a priori*. God only intuitively knows what is in man. But as he has given us an infallible law, by which we must try our own conduct, and the actions of other men; and as moral actions are the test of moral principles; —we may know, with as great a degree of certainty as is necessary to our behaviour towards mankind, what are the real principles, motives, and ends, by which the several classes of our fellow-creatures are actuated, in their several pursuits, even in spite of all their laboured disguises. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh; and out of the abundance of prevailing good or evil principles in the temper, the general course of actions betray what modesty or hypocrisy would wish to conceal. If the public teachers of the Popish communion, have been, during a space of more than a thousand years, notorious to the whole world for intolerance to all who are of a different communion; if they hold it as a first principle, that no faith is to be kept with them, when the interest of their own communion makes it eligible to break through the most solemn pledges of fidelity; if they can tread under their feet the rights of princes and the allegiance of subjects, at any time when the Court of Rome shall judge it advantageous to holy mother Church

Church to do so ;—Mankind can be at no loss to judge concerning their real character. By their fruits they must know them to be ravening wolves, even under their most flattering disguises.

Having taken this view of the passage before us, it demonstrates the truth of the following proposition.

“ That false teachers, acting up to the spirit of their false principles, are only ravening wolves, notwithstanding all their contrary fair pretences : That all who love their own souls, and the souls of their posterity are to try, and to unmask them, by the infallible test of their fruits : And that having discovered them, christians ought to guard themselves and their descendants against their craft and rapacity by all these approved ways and means that are competent to them, in the several characters in which they may be attacked.”

Among all, whom reason and revelation arrange under the predicament of false prophets, there is none to whom the caution in the text can be applied with greater, or even with equal propriety, as to the pretended PRIESTHOOD of the New-Testament *Babylon*. To them it applies, not by a distant analogy, but by way of eminence, as those who make the greatest figure in New-Testament, especially in apocalyptic, prophecy. With a prescience, which demonstrates him to be divine, our Lord darted his eyes of flame through all the most distant regions and recesses of futurity ; he foresaw the long and bloody war between himself and Antichrist ; he spake of it frequently in the days of his flesh ; and he revealed the whole afterwards, in prophetic vision, to his servant *John*. Concerning this capital band
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of opponents he speaks in the passage before us, and of all other false prophets, in so far as they coincide in their general character and designs with those of his arch-enemy.

Wherefore, without beating about the bush ;— by false prophets, in our text and proposition, we understand those of *mystical Babylon*, from the arrogant triple crowned Pontiff, who sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself, by his daring indulgences, and damnable dispensations, that he is God, to the several fraternities of mendicant locusts in the sanctimonious cowl.—Yet this we wish to be understood under the two following restrictions.

1. We desire to be understood, as meaning the Roman clergy, when they act as *one corps*, under, and directed by one head, who is indisputably marked out in the prophetic page, as *Antichrist*. In this light, they are held up to our view. *There came out of the smoke locusts on the earth.—And the shapes of the locusts were as horses prepared unto battle, and on their heads were as it were crowns of gold, and their faces were as the faces of men ; and they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.—And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit.* When that extensive and formidable fraternity are actuated by such an head, and carry into execution the designs of Antichrist, as a body confederated for that very purpose, it is impossible for any man, who believes the prophetic scriptures, and compares with them the horrid tragedies which that fraternity, in concert, have acted, in all ages, and in all countries, to entertain sentiments more favourable

able to them. Yet, it must be allowed, and candour demands such an acknowledgement, that many of that fraternity, acting as individuals, in the character of *historians* or *philosophers*, and when Popery was *out* of the question, have been ornaments to society and the sciences. Many of them, especially of late, since the light which has sprung from, and has always accompanied the reformation, hath forcibly darted its salutary rays into the kingdom of darkness, have thought justly, have spoke boldly, have wrote learnedly, and have acted nobly in the defence of morality and the christian system, against the modern assailants of religion and common sense.

2. Our proposition is to be understood of the Roman priesthood, when they believe the connected system, act up unto the bloody principles, and are actuated by the intolerant spirit of Popery. The system of Popery, undisguised, is so opposite to every original, undepraved principle in human nature, that it needs astonish no man, to find even Papists, raised above the vulgar in learning, shuddering and recoiling at the horrid idea of their own principles; industrious to disguise them, even to themselves; and averse to carry them into full execution, unless they be stimulated to it by the irresistible energy of the lust of riches, the dæmon of ambition, and a blind attachment to the grandeur of the Roman see. For the honour of human nature, we are willing to believe, that many of them are infidels to the most obnoxious of their own diabolical principles, and devoutly wish that the honour of their pretended mother church had never been stained with so many uncontravertible instances of infernal barbarity. Good men do not
always

always feel the stimulating energy of the best principles, much less will men of a refined taste and tender feelings suffer themselves to be governed by the worst, unless some *end*, able to drown the feeble voice of humanity, be presented to their view, and rouse them to action.

The impartial annals of Europe furnish innumerable instances of men possessed naturally of the sweetest tempers, plunging themselves into scenes that would disgrace savages themselves, when opportunities of dignifying the church, and aggrandizing the Roman see seemed to present themselves. Pope Urban VIII. was not naturally more barbarous than many of his predecessors, or even of his modern successors in the Pontificate; yet this very *humane* Father of Christendom, this *Vicar* of Jesus Christ could sit down, and calmly project a plan to massacre the Protestants in *Ireland*, and to extirpate what Papists are pleased to call the *northern heresy*, out of all the British dominions, by armies, stipulated to be raised for that end, and to be commanded by Popish officers only. In short, though the Popish priesthood are like other men, and will always act like other men, when their motives are the same as those of other men; yet when their idol, popery, is in question, in which other men are not concerned, they discover passions which metamorphose the best natured man into a *dæmoniac*. The *man* disappears; and the *Fox*, or the *Fury* is the only character that suits an obedient son of the pretended Catholic Church, when acting in concert with his brethren for aggrandizing that devoted society.

Having explained the passage before us, we shall further attempt,

I. To unmask the Popish priesthood, by analysing their *assumed* character ;

II. To ascertain their *real* character. These will make way for,

III. Some considerations tending to explain and enforce the caution—*Beware of false prophets, who come unto you in sheep's cloathing.*

I. We shall essay to unmask the Popish priesthood, by examining their *assumed* character.—They pretend to be,

FIRST ; *True* prophets, but are not ; for their fruits prove them to be *false* prophets.

SECONDLY ; *Innocent* sheep, but they are not ; for their fruits discover them to be *ravelling wolves*.

FIRST ; They pretend to be *true* prophets.—They come in the *rough garment* of the *true* prophet, but it is only *to deceive*. Various are the pretences of the Popish hierarchy to a divine mission ; yea, to be the *only* interpreters of the will of God to mankind, exclusive of all others of every denomination whatever. Not content with the assumed honour of being prophets of the Lord, they deny that honour to all, without the pale of the Romish communion. Let us examine some of these arrogant, uncharitable, narrow-spirited pretences.

I. They come, pretending to be possessed of, and wrapped in, *Elijah's* mantle. Arrogantly aspiring to an honour similar to that of the successor of that venerable prophet, they pretend to a lineal succession to the Apostles and the first Bishops in the several sees of Europe. While the Pope boldly avers, that he is the successor of venerable *Peter* in

the Papal chair, the other Bishops of the same Antichristian fraternity pretend to be able to trace their succession to the first public teachers of Christianity, in their respective episcopal cities or provinces.

As to the Papal claim of succession to Peter, as the first Pope, we can only say, that its absurdity is only equalled by the bare-faced arrogance with which it is made. It is a doubtful problem, which Papists could never solve in the affirmative, — Whether that venerable Apostle was ever at Rome? yea, there are many reasons which seem to make it highly probable, that he never saw that imperial city. But were it even a fact, incontestibly proved, that he was at Rome, and finished his course there, it is *certain* that he was never Bishop, much less a Pope, in that see. There are two irrefragable reasons to support the assertion. (1) Though there were a few, who aspired to a *Diotrephan* episcopacy, in the second and third centuries of Christianity, there were no *Diocesan* Bishops in the world till the beginning of the fourth century, by which time, Peter the pretended head of the Christian hierarchy, had been long at an eternal remove from every assault of Papal ambition. And it was not till at least two centuries after the commencement of a political hierarchy in the church, that the name of Pope, or Universal Bishop, according to the idea which these titles afterwards conveyed, was so much as once mentioned in the world. The scandalous bickerings between the Bishops of *Constantinople* and *Rome*, for precedence, shew incontestibly, that the idea of an Universal Bishop had never, till the commencement of the barbarous ages, entered

tered into the minds of Christians; and that it was suggested only by the absurd and scandalous ambition of those hierarchs, who filled those sees, during the contests between the eastern and western empires, in the sixth or seventh century.

(2) Peter was an Apostle, not a Bishop. Between these offices there is an immense difference. The commission of an Apostle was universal, having for its object the *whole world**. And beside, it was a necessary qualification to the Apostolate, to have been an eye-witness of the resurrection, or the glorified estate of Christ†. But a Bishop, in the scripture sense of the term, is the Pastor of one particular flock; or even in the hierarchic sense of the word, is the superintendant of a particular province or diocese: Nor is it a necessary qualification of any Bishop to have seen the risen Saviour. It is hence plain, that the Pope cannot, in the nature of things, be the successor of Peter; for the Apostles neither had, nor could have, any successors. Their office expired with themselves, as the end of their function was compleatly answered by their personal ministrations, and because none could inherit their necessary qualifications. Nor can the Pope succeed Peter as a Bishop, for he neither was, nor could be a Bishop. The commission he received in common with the other Apostles, precluded him from taking the charge of, and confining his Apostolic labours to any one particular flock. Indeed, from that Apostle's general character, we may be well assured, that he had not so learned Christ, as to sacrifice his Apostolic commission, and his fidelity in

* Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. † Acts i. 20, 21, 22.

in the discharge of it, at the shrine of Papal ambition, even though the Papal throne had been surrounded with all the glory it arrived unto in the fifteenth century.

Beside, it deserves to be noted, that if the Bishops of Rome be the successors of *Peter*, they are bound to imitate so venerable a predecessor. Why do they not the deeds of their Apostolic Father? Rather, why do they the very *reverse* of what that good man always did, except his *denying* his divine master, with his *trimming* and *dissimulation* about circumcision? Did Peter preach and practice celibacy, when it is notorious he and other Apostles had, and carried along with them, to the places they visited, the female partners of their joys and cares*? Did Peter, by a Papal bull, forbid the cup to the Laity? Or would his pretended *inferior* Paul, have submitted to such a rescript, who once made bold roundly to reprove his ghostly father for a less fault; and who tells us, that *he received of the Lord*, (not the Lord God, the Pope) *that he took the cup, saying, this cup is the New-Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it*†? Did his Holiness, Peter, prohibit the reading of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, who recommends so strongly the perusal of the scriptures, even though he acknowledges that the unlearned and unstable are apt to wrest them to their own destruction‡? Or did he excommunicate *Paul*, or condemn by a bull his writings, because he had the assurance to explain the Old Testament in the vulgar tongues, in his epistle to the Hebrews, as
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* 1. Cor. ix. 5. compared with Matt. viii. 14. † 1. Cor. xi. 25.

‡ 2 Peter iii. 15, 16.

Clement XI. condemned the excellent comments and pious reflections of Father *Quesnel* on the New-Testament? Did Peter ever forge, or procure forged memorials, acts, decretals, and the decisions of councils that never existed, to establish his supremacy over the other Apostles and the whole church, as their Holinesses of execrable memory did in the ninth and tenth centuries of christianity. Did Peter ever excommunicate kings, lay their kingdoms under interdicts, and publish bulls to loose subjects from their oaths of allegiance to their lawful princes, as Gregory VII. and Innocent III. who claimed the empire of the whole world, and thought of nothing less than subjecting the kings and princes of the whole earth to their lordly sceptre? In short, we may say of Popes, as Christ said of the Pharisees, who were indeed their genuine predecessors, “Ye are not the children of the Apostles; ye are of your father the Devil, and his works ye do.”

As to the pretended succession of inferior Bishops to the first Apostolic Bishops, in their respective sees, we have only to say, that it is not less absurd than the pretended succession of the Popes to Peter's Papal chair. We have already said, and history vouches it, that as there were no Popes till the sixth or seventh century, so there were no *diocesan* bishops, nor could there be any, till the conversion of *Constantine*, in the fourth century; a period this, at such a distance from the death of the oldest of the Apostolic bishops, that it will prove to be the most famous miracle ever the church of Rome performed, to unite these æras together, and prove that the diocesan bishops, archbishops, metropolitans and primates of the fourth century, succeeded to the plain teachers of particular congregations in
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the first century. One, with equal propriety, might affirm, that the fortunate usurper, *Cæsar*, succeeded *Numa Pompilius*, because they happened to govern in one and the same city, though the former exercised an usurped tyranny over the world; and the latter governed with justice and wisdom a single city, by the voluntary choice, and harmonious consent of its inhabitants.

But after all, succession is not the door by which the true prophets of God enter into their office. Office-power is not communicated from one mortal to another, in a succession of ages. No; Christ, the only sovereign of the church, is the sole repository of all power. *All power in Heaven and Earth* is given to him alone*. He alone communicates all office power to the ministers of his church, when they are duly chosen, and solemnly dedicated to the service of God in the church. Were the Papal throne itself erected by God, succession could not found the Pope's title to sit down in it, because he cannot succeed, till by some intervening action he be authorized to succeed. This is election. Accordingly, all the primitive Bishops, the Bishop of Rome not excepted, were chosen by the suffrages of their flocks. Nor did this instituted custom cease, till the tyranny of Antichrist was fully established over Europe. The magical word, *succession*, was not once used, as a proof of the legitimacy of office power in the Pope, or his Antichristian suffragans, till *election* gave place to cabal and villainy. *By their fruits you may know them*. Having profanely trampled under their feet the ordinance of God, by which his approved servants enter on their

* Matt. xxviii. 18.

their sacred office, and become possessed of official powers to discharge its important duties; they now attempt to amuse us with an idle story of *succession* to the Apostles and the first teachers of Christianity, while the very want of a due election to it must demonstrate to every man that reflects, that it is fabulous and nugatory.

2. The Popish priesthood come to us in the prophet's robe of pretended MIRACLES, not aware that the loud pretence they make to a power of working miracles, ascertains them to be the very Antichrist*. They are even bold to hang the truth of their being true prophets in a great measure on this rotten peg. When so much noise is made about these miracles, and when, as *Jannes* and *Jambres* withstood Moses by their pretended miracles, they endeavour to resist the truth, and to vouch the grosest lye, "that they are the only true prophets of God," by their numerous vaunted miracles; we may certainly enquire into their authenticity and credibility.

I would ask then, why these boasted miracles are never performed in any Protestant country, and before Protestants, in order to their conversion?—Certainly, Mother Church is not wanting in charity toward her rebellious children. Why then does she not expend a small portion of her miracle-effecting power among so many nations, who, though they now doubt any such power, because they never saw it exercised, would instantly become the obedient children of the Pope, if they had ocular demonstration of their error. Italy, Spain, Portugal, and France, are all staunch Papists already,

* 2 Thes. ii. 9, 10.

ready, and stand in no need of miracles to induce them to believe what they dare not misbelieve.—Miracles then lose all their glory, and even their *use*, in these countries.——Why are they confined to them only? Miracles were always wrought for the sake, not of staunch believers, but of unbelievers. Would not then the glory and *eclat* of such boasted *prodigia* be much greater in England than in Italy? Would not Holy Mother Church reap infinitely more credit and reputation by thus shifting the scene of her miracles? Does she not tempt the world to believe, that she has no such boasted power? Yea, is she not hereby obliged to confess, to her everlasting shame, that she has no such power?

But, notwithstanding a wise providence continues to give them the lye, before the whole world, they refuse to be ashamed. Given up of God to believe, or, at least, to assert a palpable falsehood in the face of the sun, so confident are they of their truth, that they even endeavour to turn the doctrine of miracles into a weapon of offence. They ask Protestants, with much triumph, where are your miracles, by which you confirm your doctrines? We answer, where they ever were,—in the Bible. As all the doctrines, which we believe, are there; so all the miracles, which God ever wrought to confirm these doctrines, are there too! Did we arrogate to ourselves the power of working miracles, we should be even as the Papists, whose *coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs, and lying wonders**. By this very pretension to a miracle-working power,—the *fruit* of unparalleled effrontery, we know them. Yes, we know

* 2. Thes. ii. 9.

know them to be that WICKED, *whom the Lord will consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming**. These miracles are but lying wonders, obtruded upon the credulous by the arts of imposture. We are bold to aver, that there never was a miracle performed by God or man, for the purpose of confirming any new truth, since *John* finished the sacred Canon; and Bible miracles are sufficient to authenticate Bible truths. But, what is most astonishing,—is, that though that venerable Apostle fenced the sacred volume, by the most awful denunciations against the daring attempts of sacrilege and imposture, yet the Papists have, in effect, added to, and taken from it, by their tradition and fabulous legends. Yea, more, they have attempted to render these canonical, by the false miracles which they pretend to have wrought for their confirmation. Every miracle is a mode of ascertaining some particular truth, to be indisputably divine; and accordingly, to be worthy of all acceptation, on its own proper evidence. No true miracle was ever wrought, but for purposes worthy of God. None were ever performed for the amusement of the credulous vulgar, and for draining their money from them, at the tombs of dead men, on a holiday.—No; If ever Papists performed miracles, they must own, it was for ascertaining the truth of some legend, for example, the translation of the *Santa Casa*, in the Church of *Loretto*†. All the boasted prodigies that have been, or are still performed there, by the image of the Virgin, are done with an intention to confirm it

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* 2 Thef. ii. 4, 8.

† The following short account of the Church of Loretto, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and famous over the popish world, will both entertain the reader, and shew him, in what light he ought to view Popish miracles, and the truths pretended to be authenticated by them.

as a truth, *that the angels lifted up, and translated the HOLY HOUSE from Nazareth, first to Dalmatia, then to the territory of Recanati, and last of all to Loretto.* It is therefore plain, that the translation of the *Santa Casa* is a new divine truth, ascertained, not by fallible testimony, but by Heaven itself, equally as

Glorious things are fabled of thee, thou Temple of Heaven's Queen and Mother of God! for Papists gravely assure us, that *Santa Casa*, the very cottage where the Virgin *Mary* was born, wooed, and married, is in the middle of this Church, surrounded by an inclosure of four walls: that this same cottage stood near thirteen centuries at Nazareth; but that taking a dislike to its station, so far from Christ's vicar and the votaries of its ancient tenant, *Mary*, the Angels took compassion on its pitiable plaint, lifted it up and carried it into *Dalmatia*: That it remained there only three years and seven months, for at the end of that Period, these same tender hearted angels carried it into the territory of *Recanati*: and that though, in this place, celestial concerts were heard by the neighbouring inhabitants, it could not stay so far from his holiness; pity therefore to its approved piety induced these angels once more to load their willing shoulders with it, and to carry it to the Popes neighbourhood, *Loretto*; where it now says, This is my rest, here will I stay, for I have desired it. All this interesting story is hung up in the church; and is translated into twelve different languages to edify the people who speak them, viz. *Hebrew*, to convert the Jews to Christianity; *Greek*, to convince the Greek church of their wickedness, in not submitting to the Pope's authority, seeing *Santa Casa* prefers the purlieus of Rome to Canaan itself; *Arabic*, to make the Turk fall out with his alcoran, when he reads such a self-evident history as quite eclipses all the stories of his Prophet; *Latin*, for the use of all nations; *Sclavonian, German, French, Spanish, Welch, English, Scots and Irish*, to convince heretics of all these nations, how little faith they have, when they distrust the truth of Transubstantiation, seeing this story, almost as incredible, is daily attested by miracles performed by the Virgin, in honour of her ancient cabin. They further assure us, that every stone in *Santa Casa* is so attached to the environs of Rome, that God himself has wrought miracles to humour a single stone, when it chanced to be carried off against its will. The story is this; old *Suarez*, being at the Council of Trent, supplicated the Pope for a single stone of *Santa Casa*, to put into a Chapel, he was building in Spain. The Pope granted the suit, and the stone was sent. But, behold, *Suarez* paid dear for his own piety, and the Pope's facility. He got the gripes; nor was there any hopes of his recovery, till he sent back the stone; and as it approached *Santa Casa*, old *Suarez* brake wind, and gradually recovered. This stone is now distinguished from the rest in the wall, by an Iron grate about it, to prevent in future, any such accident. Here are miracles! Here Popish miracles themselves are outmiracled! But alas for the Pope's infallibility! at a time too, when he needed it most, to direct the holy Council. God Almighty behoved to work a miracle on poor *Suarez* to rectify the error of the infallible head of the Church, and to gratify the pious humour of the holy stone!

as the translation of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, or as the ascension of *JESUS CHRIST*. If Popish miracles be genuine, the first must be believed upon the same ground as the last; and both are equally canonical, and worthy of all acceptance. Yea, if we are to make any difference, the former is much more worthy of a divine faith; for if the priests of Italy are to be believed, on the subject of the miracles, performed by the *Mother of God* and *Queen of Heaven*, at *Loretto*, the translation of her house from *Judea* to *Italy* is confirmed by infinitely more miracles than any one truth in the whole Bible. It follows, therefore, that this ridiculous legend, thus authenticated by so many miracles, makes another chapter of our Bible, and deserves to be read and believed with as much faith and reverence, as the history of Christ's resurrection and ascension into Heaven. The same may be said, with equal truth, of all the legends in the Roman Breviary, that are there fabled to have been confirmed by miracles. Thus we shall have pretty voluminous *addenda* to our Bibles. Alarming! The very pretence of working miracles for authenticating apocryphal stories, most certainly subjects the pretenders to the awful certification, with which the sacred canon is concluded, and to all the punishment included in it. *I testify to every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall ADD unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book**.

3. The Romish priesthood come to us in the gorgeous robes of *Sacerdotal Titles*. These are so numerous, as well as so lofty, that it would give full employment to a court of heraldry, to ascertain and adjust their different, and often jarring pretensions. The Pope himself has more titles, *names of blasphemy*

phemy, I was going to say, than all the Pagan high priests ever aspired unto. These were content with PONTIFEX MAXIMUS; but he, and his blaspheming flatterers have ransacked and beggared language to furnish him with names, adequate to his pride.—He is *Pope*; *the Great Pope*; *Our Lord God, the Pope*; *His Holiness*; *The Vicar of CHRIST*; *Peter*; *The Successor of Peter*; *Holy Father*, &c. &c. &c. The subordinate clergy are diversified with as many names, serving to indicate their ambition and pride, as would fill many pages of a Glossary. They are *Cardinals*, *Archbishops*, *Primates*, *Bishops*, *Deans*, *Subdeans*, *Archdeacons*, *Curates*, &c. &c. &c. And how effectually would all these frighten, or divert children, when they appear in all the *Insignia* and trinkets of their orders, such as *Mitres*, *Crosiers*, *Hats*, *Caps*, *Tonsures*, &c.—Though by such great swelling titles of vanity, they may think to recommend themselves to the admiration of the great vulgar, and to the veneration of the low vulgar, we may certainly ask them, Who instituted these offices in the Christian Church, and conferred on them these swelling titles? The BISHOP or PRESBYTER, and the DEACON we know to be of divine institution, in the Church; but whence are ye,—Ye Popes, Cardinals, Primates, Archbishops, and all the other denominations of your fraternity? Is not your very existence in the Church of God, under these names of blasphemy, a burlesque on Christianity? Does it not flatly contradict the very letter of Christ's command—*Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion, and they that are great exercise authority, but it shall NOT be so among you**? Your genuine character is drawn in the prophetic page, seventeen hundred years ago.—*I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names*
of

of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.— And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication*.

SECONDLY ; They pretend to be harmless, innocent sheep. *They come unto you in Sheep's cloathing.* Let us examine this pretension, and its proofs.

1. They say that they are not only Christians, but that they and their votaries are the *only* genuine Christians in the world ; and that all who are not of the Romish Communion are in a state of damnation ! But, pray ! where is the proof of this most wretched opinion ? Have they more of the spirit of Christ dwelling in them, or appearing in their moral conduct†, and in their political behaviour, than others ? Does their damning all without the pale of their Communion favour of the spirit of Christ ? Do their *Auto de fes* — Their *Inquisitions*, their *Massacres*, their *Plots*, and their black *Conspiracies*, prove their exclusive title to the name of Christians, and to the sole possession of the spirit of Christ ? Does their subjection to the authority of Christ prove it ? Rather, does not the contempt they openly pour on his institutions, by their profanely mixing human rites and childish ceremonies with these ordinances, prove the very reverse ?
What

* Rev. xvii. 3, 4.

† As a proof of the superior virtue of the Roman Clergy, his HOLINESS, Julius III, the sacred *Repository* of infallibility, was scarcely seated in the Papal Chair, when he bestowed a Cardinal's hat on the keeper of his monkeys, a boy, picked up from the scum of the people, and who was also the abominable object of his unnatural pleasures. This *Immaculate* Vicar of Christ, being reproached by the other Cardinals for introducing a member, so unworthy, into the Sacred College, replied, — What virtue found you in *Me*, to induce you to place *Me* in the Papal Chair ?

What reason therefore, do they, can they, assign? Why, truly, “they are members of the Catholic Church, out of which there can be no Christians, and no salvation.” Absurdity and arrogance! How grossly ignorant, or how abominably haughty must men be, to assert such a barefaced lye? Can a *particular* Church be the *Catholic* Church? Does she include the Greek Church, the Asiatic Churches and all the Protestant Churches? The Catholic Church, never was and never will be, one organized society, under one mortal head. The Catholic Church is that society, which is made up of many particular organized churches, and which, in very different degrees of light and purity, holds the HEAD, even Christ.

But say the Papists, “We hold his vicar, the Pope;—These pretended churches acknowledge not that centre of unity, and therefore are not true churches!” But who told them that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ, and the centre of the churches unity? The holy scriptures say no such thing. Were there no true churches in the world till the sixth or seventh century? And did the churches of Christ want a centre of unity till that period? But what if I shall say, and prove too, that their acknowledging the Pope, as the churches head, and centre of her unity, strips themselves of all title to the character of visible, professing christians? I say, *visible, professing* christians, for though real christians some of them may be, and doubtless are; yet christians, *visibly* and *credibly* professing their subjection to Christ, none can be, who acknowledge the Pope, as Lord of their consciences.—Calling any man master on earth, in this sense, is inconsistent with our allegiance to the King of kings.——Besides, the formal and immediate

reason

reason of a christian's faith and obedience, is the *sole authority* of Christ, speaking in his word. But the formal reason of a Papist's blind faith and passive obedience is the *authority* of the Pope, speaking in his Canons, Decretals, Bull and Curfes. And to keep people from acknowledging Christ, as the only Lord of their understandings and consciencies, their haughty guides refuse to allow them to hear Christ speaking to them in his word, by denying to the unlearned, the use of the oracles of God in a language they understand, and to all the right of interpreting and understanding the scriptures for themselves. There is, therefore, the most palpable contrast between a *Christian* and a *Papist*. The one cannot be the other, any more than an *Englishman*, voluntarily subjecting himself to the laws of Great Britain, can be a *Frenchman*, slavishly cringing under the tyrannical yoke of his Grand Monarque. "By their fruits you know them." That religion which cannot exist, but in consequence of emancipating ourselves from our own understandings and consciences, and from the authority of Christ over them,—And without subjecting ourselves blindly to the authority of a fastidious priest, arrogantly assuming the title of Christ's Vicar, cannot be the christian religion. They may give it a name, who can find one bad enough for a system of bigotry that tends to banish all religion out of the world, and to metamorphose mankind into the passive subjects, and the ready engines of Papal tyranny and brutal cruelty.

2. To impose more effectually on mankind, and to prove by ocular demonstration that they are harmless sheep, and very good christians; Popish prophets come unto you in mournful weeds, patched up of Mortifications, Pilgrimages, Penances, Celibacy,

bacy, Vows of Poverty, and twenty other party coloured clouts. This truly laughable foolscap is rendered yet more ridiculous, by its trimmings and decorations. They make broad its philacteries, and stud them thick with crosses and crucifixes of all shapes and sizes, with strings of beads and bits of bones, with rusty nails and rotten wood, and with many other such precious jewels. When this goodly suit happens to become *dirty* (for the Romish Clergy, though all *virgins*, are not immaculate!) they are never at a loss for a proper *Menstruum* to wash it in, while there is such abundance of *holy water* and *virgins milk*, of *supererogatory merit* and *Saint's blood*, in the treasures of their Holy Mother.

Notwithstanding all that reverence of themselves, they wish to inspire, by this holy array; we may certainly ask, *Whorequired these things at their hands?* Do these patches of human invention prove them to be christians, and the *only* christians in the world? Rather, are not these a proof, that they are no christians at all? Subjection and voluntary obedience to the laws of Christ are certainly the decisive proof of christian profession. *If ye love me*, said our Divine Master, *keep my commandments*. But on the other hand, a rejection of the authority of Christ alone, as the only reason of faith and religious obedience, is the sure mark of rebellion against Christ, and of the very reverse of a christian profession. Of this crime, Papists are indisputably guilty, when they practically throw off subjection to Christ, by submitting to human authority, imposing ridiculous austerities and superstitious observances on their consciences;—A yoke of slavery, which Christ never imposed, which a tyrant alone could frame; and to which those only can submit, who are become weary of Christ's yoke,

yoke, which is easy, pleasant, and profitable. *Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven**. And it is certainly a breach of none of the *least* of God's commandments, to emancipate men's consciences from the authority of Christ, the only head of his Church; and to transfer their obedience from HIM to a proud Pontiff, who, blasphemously calling himself God and the *Vicar* of Christ, dares to demand implicit obedience to commands, which never entered into Christ's mind to enjoin on any of his disciples; commands, which only tend to metamorphose christians into profane *Mimics*†, *Merry-Andrews*‡, and despicable *Slaves*||.

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* Matt. v. 19.

† What a string of *profane mimicry* of sacred actions, absolutely *inimitable*, are performed by the Priest in the celebration of the mass! The reader will see a sample of these profane gesticulations, together with their purile, as well as profane significations in *L'explication des Ceremonies de la Messe*.

‡ What Buffoons and Jack-puddings do the Popish vestments make of those who wear them! They are gazed at, and no doubt, greatly edifying to old women and children. But every wise man, every christian, tenacious of Christ's institutions, must abhor them. Popish Priests have not the honour of being first in the fashion, for the Pharisees got the start of them.

|| The Slavery, to which Popery reduces those who submit to it, is intolerable: Moral sentiment of their own, they can have none. Their consciences are the echo of the Pope's bulls, and of the Confessor's bindings and loosings. Their understandings and consciences are ever subject to the whims and caprices of superstitious *Dotards*, or to the arts of designing *Knaves*; for none but the one or the other durst take it on them, to demand implicit faith from creatures, who morally depend on God alone. The law of *Moses*, from which Christ hath delivered his People, was light as a feather, mild as clemency itself, when compared with the yoke of Popery. That was fixed and known; this is versatile and capricious as the mind of every Tyrant, who, for the time, fills the Pontifical chair. The first was of divine institution, and answered some important purposes; the last is of tyrannic institution, and answers no purpose at all, but to draw off mankind from their moral dependence on God, that they may prostitute their consciences to the magisterial dictates of a creature, labouring under more and greater temptations to blunder than

Having endeavoured to pull off the mask, under which the Roman priesthood would force themselves upon mankind, as *true Prophets*, and *harmless Sheep*; I will now endeavour,

II. To prove their *real* character, held up to our view, and to our just fears, in the text. They are, in spite of all their lying pretences, **RAVENING WOLVES**. By their fruits, we know, all the world knows, that they deserve this character, on many accounts, and in a great variety of respects. —Like Ravening Wolves, they commit the most terrible depredations—on all individuals subject to them;—on all individuals of the Christian denomination, who secede from them;—on civil society;—on the ignorant Heathen;—on the poor Jews;—on the law of God;—and on the Christian system.

1. They make a prey of all individuals in their **OWN** communion. They commit horrid depredations on their goods, their bodies, and their souls.

The goods and chattels of Papists are a prey to their ravening Priesthood. The clergy receive them from the hands of the midwife, and demand a tax upon them as soon as they are swaddled.—With vulture's eyes, and lion's paws, they attend them daily, from the font to the grave, draining the fruits of honest industry from them, for prayers, masses, confessings, pardons, indulgences, and a hundred other things of equal value. And unwilling to suffer even the dead to be buried out of their sight, or at least, to lose sight of their own advantage from them, after they are dead, they have invented a Purgatory; they pretend they are able, by the magic of their masses, to deliver souls out of that disagreeable climate; and in this manner

ner they raven immense sums from the dying, and from the executors and relations of the dead.

The bodies of Romanists are a prey to their rapacious Clergy. As by the arts, just now mentioned, they seize on the wealth of the laborious part of mankind, they often reduce their families to great indigence and disease in Popish countries. What numerous instances of this truth are to be found in France, in the Italian States, and in the German Popish Cantons! Besides, by their penances, pilgrimages, and unnatural, as well as uninstituted fasts, what injury is done to the health and lives of their obsequious Penitents, in every country! or what sums of money must these pay to them for indulgences, to redeem their bellies from hunger, their backs from the whip, or their health from being ruined!

But the *Soul*, the precious soul, is that, on which the ghostly Fathers of the Romish Church lay with the most ruthless consequences, their wolfish paws. There is not a power of the human soul, of which they do not wish to make a prey, to their own temporal emolument.

They put out the eyes of the understanding, in the same manner, and for the same reason that the Philistines put out the eyes of Sampson, their formidable enemy. Well aware, that were mankind allowed the use of their own eyes, they would not suffer any of their fellow-mortals to usurp the government of their consciences, the Romish Clergy have had the address to persuade them to allow their eyes to be put out. They will not allow them the use either of reason or revelation.

Reason's eye, in all staunch Papists, is wholly extinguished, as far as it concerns religion. They

are allowed to see with the eyes of the Priest alone, and even he is only permitted to see with the eyes of the Fathers, General Councils, and the Infal-
 lible head of the Church. Thus the blind lead the blind, and both fall into the ditch. Yea, accord-
 ing to the doctrine of the Romish Church, in re-
 lation to Transubstantiation, no man, not even the
 Catholic Guide himself, must believe his reason and
 his senses. If, notwithstanding the testimony of
 our senses, and of our reason, we must believe the
 transmutation of bread and wine into the glorified
 body of Christ, we cannot, after this, credit our
 reason and senses in any thing. God might there-
 fore resume his own gifts, as wholly useless, and
 even hurtful to our faith. And if the lower orders
 of mankind must not trust their reason, what right
 have Fathers, Councils, and Popes to reason for
 us? Ought they to believe their senses and their
 reason more than their fellow mortals, when they
 assure them, that *no* man ought to believe his
 senses? What right have they to dictate to others,
 whose eyes they have put out, when they them-
 selves acknowledge that they have voluntarily put
 out their own eyes too?

The light of revelation is in no better plight, in
 the Romish Church, than the light of reason.—
 Though it be a candle lighted up by the Father of
 Lights, the Romish Clergy *put it under the bushel*
 of a Papal prohibition, to be read by the vulgar, or
 to be understood by any, but in the sense which it
 was understood in by the Fathers, whom not one
 in a thousand, of even the most learned of the laity,
 ever had an opportunity or an inclination to con-
 sult. But supposing all could be acquainted with
 the sentiments of the Fathers, to believe the Scrip-
 tures implicitly in their sense, this is not to believe the

the *Scriptures*, but the *Fathers*. The Pope's authoritative prohibition, therefore, amounts to a transferring the Faith of the Church from God to men, many of whom, as far as we can learn from their allegorical and purile comments, appear to have ill understood the *Scriptures*, even for themselves. It puts out the eyes of mankind universally, and bids them see with the eyes of others, which, to say the least, were none of the best.—After all, what good reason can be assigned why these, whom the Romish Church has dubbed Fathers, should be allowed for themselves and for us too, and we be deprived of all title to see at all? What great sin have Christians of the eighteenth century committed, to forfeit all right to their own eyes, in reading the holy *Scriptures*, when that privilege was granted to those of the second, third, and even the eleventh centuries?

These Ravening Wolves lay waste the *consciences* of Christians. That awful power of the human soul is without doubt originally the Vicegerent of God. But in the bosom of every Papist, it is degraded into the Vicegerent of the Pope. As the eye of the understanding is extinct, and as the Pope sees for the whole Church, and is her universal lawgiver, the consciences of her members can only echo the language of his authority, and can only accuse or excuse according to the nature and purport of his bulls. As he makes sins and duties, by making laws to bind the conscience, that awful power can only accuse for the first, and excuse in relation to the last, in proportion as it implicitly subjects itself to the obligation of these laws. Now, as the conscience of every Papist, as such, is bound and directed by these laws, it is the deputy of the Papal Lawgiver, and no longer the Vicegerent

Vicegerent of God. Nay, more! As the laws of God himself do not, at first instance, bind the Papist's conscience, but only in so far as they are infallibly declared and interpreted, by the Papal authority, to be the laws of God,—the conscience of the Papist is not bound by these laws, but by the law of the Pope, ascertaining them to be the laws of God. That faculty, therefore, even in *this* case, is not the Vicegerent of God, responsible to him; but the echo of the Pope's authority, and amenable only to his tribunal.

To add no more on this subject, the Roman Priesthood debase and vitiate the human passions. Ravening Wolves themselves, they have the art of giving a certain ferocity to the passions, which by no means is natural to them. The due, regular, and manly exercise of the superior powers of understanding and consciousness, has an immediate tendency, and never fails, to refine and sweeten the passions. But when, by the ghostly injunctions of their Spiritual Guides, mankind are prohibited the employment of these noble powers about religion, the most noble of all subjects; and when, instead of that, these faculties are put under the sovereignty and despotic power of priests, to dictate to them at pleasure,—the passions, which never move but in subordination to these powers, are easily managed by these ghostly Directors to serve all the purposes of Priestly ambition, at any time when they find it proper to call them into their service. In the bosom of a Papist, these inferior springs of action in human nature, are in a far worse state than in the breast of a mere savage. In the last, they are subject to his *own* narrow, and often mistaken notions of right and wrong; but in the first, they are entirely under the controul of *others*,
whose

whose schemes of ambition are ordinarily much more extensive and dangerous than the ill-formed, short-lived plans of the rude savage. In the case of Papists, they take a wrong direction, and are artfully encouraged in it, by those who assume the direction of their consciences. Hence the assassinations and massacres which have been committed by Papists, under the direction of their Priests, have been infinitely more barbarous than those ordinarily perpetrated by the hands of barbarians themselves. Witness, St Bartholemew's day in France.

2. Like Ravening Wolves, they make terrible havock of all those denominations of CHRISTIANS, who *secede* from their communion, as far as they can.

The truth of this is obvious to all, who are acquainted with the history of Europe, and with the political state of all the Popish nations, at this hour.

The Priesthood of Rome have ever, with the most unrelenting cruelty, pursued all, who have separated from them. They thundered out excommunication against the Greek Church, not because she was become idolatrous in her worship, but because she refused to submit to the lordly dominion of the Roman Pontiff. The affair of the observation of *Easter*, and that of the Procession of the Holy Ghost, were only mere pretences, seeing they tolerate and patronize in their own communion, discrepancies from the general faith of Christians, of infinitely greater consequence. They preached crusades against, and committed the greatest inquisitorial cruelties upon the poor Albigenes, in the thirteenth century. They annually thunder out a bull of excommunication on *Maundy Thursday*, against all *Hussites*, *Wickliffites*, *Lutherans*, *Zuinglians*, *Cal-*

winists, Hugonots, and Anabaptists. They have persecuted Protestants with fire and sword, stake and gibbet, in all countries where they could influence the secular powers to use these terrible weapons. They have plotted the destruction of Protestant senates, at one *Coup de foudre*. In a word, their uniform practice shews, that there is no cruelty too shocking for them, when they have an opportunity of exercising it against Protestants, and when the secular interest of their pretended Church can be promoted by it.

The present political state of Popish kingdoms shews, what Ravening Wolves the Romish Priesthood are to Protestants. They have by their intrigues procured, that no Protestants shall be tolerated in any of them.—Protestants indeed, are winked at in some of them, but even this small favour we owe not to the Clergy. By arts peculiar to themselves, they procured the revocation of the edict of *Nantz*, by which France sacrificed her public faith, and a great part of her most valuable subjects, to the glory of Mother Church. We are told, that Papists now are much more tolerant than they were, some centuries ago. We wish the assertors of such jargon would prove it, by pointing out one Popish kingdom, where any one denomination of Protestants is tolerated.—Even the Church of England, many of whose clergy have shewn their willingness to return to a good understanding with Rome, can find no place in their charity. No agreement with them, either in their articles or their rites can procure so much as a toleration of the English Church even in France, where complaisance is characteristical of the Prince and the Peasant. Nothing but *unconditional* subjection to the ecclesiastic jurisdiction of the Pope can be

be admitted, as a foundation for the exercise of common christian charity, towards even those, who differ from them in scarcely any of their *minutiæ*, provided the authority of the Pope is disclaimed. This shews, of what spirit they are.—— Besides, notwithstanding all the *odium*, their former bulls, cabals, cruelties, massacres, and assassinations of princes, have brought on their communion, no Pope, no General Council of their Church hath ever reprobated these, by any public edict. A proof this, that were they in the same circumstances as formerly, they would act over again the same horrid scenes. If they would not, in the name of sincerity, why don't they assure the world of it, by a public condemnation of those tragedies, which have made them stink in the nostrils of all nations?—But I forgot—"The Church of Rome is *immaculate* and *infallible*; and to publish any such bull would be a virtual renunciation of infallibility." Well! were opportunities to offer like the former, to re-act the former villainies, the Sons of Holy Mother Church would be as immaculate, in any future massacre, as they have been in the past. Infallibility can never do wrong; and he, or they, who boast the possession of this gift, can never be guilty of a fault, even when their hands are reeking with the innocent blood of thousands.

3. The Popish Priesthood are Ravening Wolves to CIVIL SOCIETY. —The state of all Popish countries is a striking proof of this truth. Like Locusts, they eat up every green thing. St. Peter's patrimony, in the heart of the most fertile country in Europe, is peeled and poor to a proverb. The inferior Bishops are not less a burthen upon their dioceses, as far as their power extends. And the

other clergy, regular and secular, make a prey of almost every thing, which escapes the paws of their rapacious superiors. Princes have been obliged to make laws, raise armies, fight battles, spill the best blood of their kingdoms, and fill Europe with war and carnage, in order to check the insolence, and bound the avarice of these Ravening Wolves. The history of *Investitures*; the long struggles of the Gallic Church; the wars between the Emperors and the Popes, and the famous achievements of *St. Thomas* of Canterbury—serve to shew how these Ravening Wolves have preyed on the European nations. And in this very age, the Popish princes found it necessary to repress the encroachments of these Vultures. Loth, very loth, was the Roman See to abolish the order of *Jesuits*; but necessity became law. Far from being convinced that that society, which, ever since its erection, had merited so well at the hands of the Pontiffs by their *Assassinations, Plots, Conspiracies, detestable Morals, and abominable Casuistry*, ought to be abolished, Clement XIV. prompted only from necessity, dissolved that obnoxious Order, lest the ghost of *Henry VIII.* should start up in Spain, Portugal, and France, to the great terror and annoyance of himself and his ghostly Successors*.

4. These Ravening Wolves have committed terrible depredations on the pitiable HEATHEN.—The *East* and the *West Indies, South America, and China*, can vouch this melancholy truth. Maddened by the abominable Priests, what torrents of blood did flow in the *West Indies, in Mexico, and in Peru*, by the murderous hands of worse than brutish Spaniards! and in *China*, what fatal commotions would

* This appears as with a Sun-beam from the LETTERS of Pope CLEMENT XIV. lately published in *Newcastle*—particularly Letters cxi, cxii, cxiii. &c.

would they have raised, to glut their avarice, and to aggrandize the Roman See, unless they had been seasonably prevented! What a shocking representation of Christianity did they there make, in order to conciliate the Chinese to the Popish yoke? Don't their own writers tell us, that they persuaded these poor Infidels, whom they pretended to convert, that their Idolatrous religion was not much different from the Christian; that it was the true God, whom they worshiped by the name of *Tien*, i. e. the Heavens; and that the worship they paid to *Confucius*, and to their Ancestors might be allowed to converted Heathens? And why all this villainous misrepresentation of our holy religion? Not surely to save them by it—but, in their true character, to secure to themselves the possession of the means of making a prey of their substance, and gorging their rapacious maw with their immense wealth.

5. The poor Jews can tell how much they have suffered by the rapacious paws of these Ravening Wolves. This truth receives evidence from the *Auto de fes* that have been so frequently lighted up in Spain and Portugal, in which so many of that unhappy nation have perished. The prejudices, which that people have against Christianity, have not been a little strengthened by the cruelties, exercised upon them, by these Ravening Wolves, and by those, whose consciences they controul. — And, indeed, we may justly despair of the conversion of that numerous people to the Christian faith, till ANTICHRIST be no more. The very idea of the Pope, whom that people, with too much reason, call the Christian *God*, together with that of the cruelties they have suffered by his instigation, makes them shudder at the very name of Christianity,

nity, of which he pretends to be the Patron.——
Speedily, for their sakes, may it be heard over all
the world, that *Babylon is fallen, and shall rise no
more!*

6. Not satisfied with committing depredations upon persons and things on earth,—that ravening race assail the very LAW of GOD. Conscious, that the Sacred Decalogue condemns them, they have had the effrontry and unparalleled boldness to fix their fangs on the arc of God, that sacred repository of moral precepts. They have not only, after the example of their execrable predecessors, the Scribes and Pharisees, made the law of God of none effect by their traditions; but they have torn out the *Second* precept altogether, and made it only an appendage to the first; and that they might save appearances, and keep up the number, *ten*, they have divided the *Tenth* into two. Strange arrogance. However, they in this instance, shew, that they are conscious of their being *Idolaters!* otherwise, why all this antipathy to the second command? Is it not because they dare not worship the Cross or the Virgin, and at the same time repeat that precept? Yet, is it less obligatory on the conscience, because they have degraded it into an appendix? Is it less a precept, because they tack it to the first? No; the whole system of their idolatry, like Dagon, must fall before the Arc, out of which they shall find it impossible either to steal, or to raven a single precept. In spite of their sacrilegious hands, *Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled†.*

7. As if all the former instances of their sacrilegious plunder were too little to glut their voraci-

ous

ous appetites, the Roman Clergy attack CHRISTIANITY itself. Indeed, *this* hath suffered *most* from their rapacity. Scarce a single article of the Christian faith hath escaped them. In vain do they boast of their orthodoxy, in holding the antient creeds, when their *New* creeds, the creed of *Trent*, and that of Pope *Pius* enervate every article of these ancient Symbols. Do they believe in *One* God? They say, yes. We deny it. Those who pay divine worship, (in which there can be no *degrees*, much less *kinds*) to a number of objects equal, if not superior to that of ancient *Greece* or *Rome*, can never prove that they acknowledge *one* God. Words and actions are different things. Though in words they own, in their worship they deny, the unity of Godhead. Do they acknowledge a *Trinity* of divine persons? They answer with their usual pride, that they are the only orthodox Trinitarians in the world. We insist, that they are the greatest enemies, whom the Scripture doctrine of Trinity ever had. Their doctrine of that august mystery hath made more *Arians* and *Socinians* than ever the famed heads of these seats were capable of making. While they put it upon the same footing as their absurd doctrine of Transubstantiation, no wonder human nature recoil. Can the Scripture Trinity be painted on glass windows? The Popish trinity can, as their temples witness to the world. Do they believe in the doctrine of a *complete* atonement, made by the expiatory sufferings of Christ? They say so, in words; but their actions give them the lie. Their *sacrifice* of the mass, daily reiterated, proves, that they believe that Christ's atoning sacrifice was of no more avail than the sacrifices of the Jewish altar, which made nothing perfect. Their doctrine of penance, satisfactions, pilgrimages, fastings and all such fooleries, proves the

the same thing.—But why should I spend your time in the enumeration of particular articles of their pretended orthodoxy, when it may be easily proved, that were the System of Popery more pure than it is, formally considered, it is not *Christianity* but *Popery*, between which there is an eternal repugnance. These ravening wolves content not themselves with assaulting the articles of the Christian faith in detail, but worry and devour the whole System at once, They take away the *Bible*, the only repository of Christianity, from the people, and suffer it not to be understood but according to the bulls, canons and decretals of the Roman See. These are the only repository of the articles of the *Poplan's* faith. Till, therefore, it be proved, that the Bible and the Papal bulls are formally one thing, *Christianity* and *Popery*, the *Christian* and the *Poplan* will continue eternally distinct objects. It is naturally impossible, that the profession of Christianity can exist where popery is established; because there, the very means of knowing what Christianity is, are withheld from mankind. The genuine profession of Christianity stands entirely on the foundation of a *divine* Testimony. This is withdrawn; and the basis on which the *parrot profession* of Christianity rests, in the popish church, is the *Testimony* of her pretended head, the *Decrees* of councils, *Tradition* and the *Writings* of the fathers. Till it, therefore, can be proved, that these last are not only orthodox, but *formally one* with the testimony of the TRUE WITNESS, it will never be proved, that there is a genuine profession of Christianity, in any country, where the Pope dictates to the people the articles of their faith.

It is now time to proceed——

III. To explain, and enforce the caution in the text. BEWARE of false prophets.

I have already observed, that the original word, translated *beware*, can scarcely be rendered into English, in its full signification, by any one word. It is a metaphor, taken from that solicitude, to which a justly founded suspicion of imminent danger naturally prompts every man. False prophets, being inwardly Ravening Wolves, always ready to injure mankind, in their most important interests, in those of the SOUL, must be ever objects of a too well founded suspicion, and are therefore to be avoided with the greatest care. We have already seen how formidable the Popish Priesthood have been, and still are to individuals, both without and within the pale of their communion; and how inimical they are to society both civil and religious. Permit me, therefore, to address myself—

1. To individuals *within* the pale of the Popish Church. Should Providence bring this discourse under the eyes of any of you, who falsely call yourselves Catholics, we beg you, in the bowels of compassion to your precious souls, to save yourselves from this untoward generation of blind guides and Ravening Wolves, who have disgraced humanity as well as the Christian religion by their insufferable pride, their unbounded ambition, their dark villainies, and their infernal cruelties.

As long as you receive your religious principles and rites, on the word of your priests, you have them, I do not say at the *Second* hand, but from an *Unknown* hand. The priests teach you to wink hard, and “implicitly to believe what the church believes, for she cannot err.” But what do they mean by this church, that cannot err? What is
this

this *Substratum* of Infallibility? Have they told you? Or dare they affirm, that they themselves are agreed about it? Don't some say, it is the Pope? Don't others say, nay; but it is the Pope, and a general council? Don't some say, that it is neither the one nor the other; but that it is the church diffusive? Whom can you believe? The rule of your faith, then, is a thing *unknown* to you. You are told of certain doctrines and rites, and you are assured they are infallibly true and good, for the church believes and receives them. But they cannot agree to tell you, *who* or *what* is the seat of this infallibility, to warrant your faith. The priest certainly cannot say, that he is infallible; nor can he tell you, who or what infallibly informed him, that all he teaches you is true. Your faith, then, like *Noah's* dove, hath not where to rest its foot. Your whole church, head and members, is like a company of blind people, walking together, and muttering something about a clue, to guide them, but not one of them can tell another, *where* it is. — But more! could your Babel builders understand one another about the seat of Infallibility, you are still where you were. You have only the *fallible* testimony of men, to vouch the possession of infallibility. Your faith still rests on human testimony. You are intentionally imposed on, in this important affair; for you are debarred from reading the only Book, in your own language, in which the *infallible* testimony, the testimony of God, is recorded; the Council of *Trent* hath abused you with a most faulty translation, in a dead language, and given its sanction to it, in preference even to the Originals; and the same council hath set up *Tradition*, the *Fathers* and the *Decrees* of councils, to be the *Interpreters* of its sense, and the *Objects* of your implicit

implicit faith. The infallible word of God is not, therefore, the rule of your faith. The Bible has *no* meaning to you, but what vague tradition and the jarring opinions of fallible mortals put upon it. It is, certainly, on these, and many other accounts already hinted, high time for you, to open your eyes, and endeavour to use them for yourselves, and your most important interests. Suffer no longer designing, or deluded priests to deceive you. Permit no more, Ravening Wolves, first to cheat you, under the mask of Innocent Sheep; and afterwards, to make a prey of your estates, bodies, and immortal souls. Open the Bible, and study it for yourselves, in spite of your tyrannical Priesthood. There you will find a merciful God addressing you, as the Angel addressed Lot, *Come out of Babylon the Great, my people, that ye be not partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her Sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her Iniquities**.

2. To Individuals *without* the pale of the Romish Church. Beware of Ravening Wolves.—They may deceive you, under the habiliments of sheep, and then find opportunities to devour you, in their proper character. At such a time as this, the following advices, I flatter myself, will be acceptable to you.

Search the Scriptures. Arm your minds with the knowledge of all revealed truth. Use every help, within your reach, to understand the Oracles of God for yourselves. As ignorance is the mother of devotion, in the Romish Church, so it is the principal dark avenue by which her teachers decoy the unwary into her communion. Their

snare are principally laid for those. Make the Bible the rule of your faith. Be on your guard against Scepticism and Infidelity. The transition from the regions of doubt, to these of delusion, is short and easy. After the mind hath wearied herself in the first, she generally seeks repose in the last; and Popery promises her a convenient asylum. Old sins may be *easily* expiated in that communion, by the meritorious action of *returning* to the bosom of Holy Mother; and old vices may still be persisted in, while there is any money in the pocket to pay for indulgences and pardons, during life; and any thing in the Testament to pay for a competent number of masses, when dead.—Give all diligence to become acquainted with the power of the Christian religion on your own hearts. *Holding the truth in unrighteousness* is ordinarily punished, by being given up to believe lies. Satisfaction with the name, without an experience of the power of Christianity, introduced Popery in the first ages; and it will do so in the latter ages too, unless Protestants be on their guard, and shew more of the transforming energies of religion on their hearts, in their ordinary practice.—Cast your eyes frequently on the history of Popery, in all ages. You will perceive easily, the horrors and cruelties of that intolerant religion. The history of Europe, for a thousand years, scarcely presents any thing beside, to our view. Our Martyrologies contain nothing else. Shall we again take that Serpent into our bosoms, which stung to death our Ancestors, and the Servants of the Living God in all nations? God forbid!

3. The *Churches of Christ* ought to be aware of False Prophets, who, while they come to them in Sheep's cloathing, are inwardly Ravening Wolves.
Permit,

Permit, ye sacred Societies! one of the most unworthy who minister in holy things, to address you. Long have you been an object of envy to the rapacious Hierarchs of Rome! Long have they vehemently thirsted for your dissolution, and for the blood of your faithful pastors and people! Well aware from experience, that open attacks will prove vain, they now endeavour to rock you to rest, by *fair pretences*, in order to surprize and destroy you. at once. *Equo ne credite, Teucric!* Believe them not. Make all possible provision to prevent their success. Let the members of churches alarm one another of their common danger. Let them be found in their respective posts. Let them use those arms, which the gospel hath put into their hands, even the whole armour of God. Let them conspire, with Christian zeal, to guard one another, and their posterity, against the arts of Rome, by maintaining and perpetuating a just horror of all the peculiar doctrines, all the gross superstitions, and all the barbarous cruelties of *the Mother of Abominations, drunken with the blood of the Saints and Martyrs of Jesus*. Study by all means, to maintain gospel order. A church walking together in harmony of sentiment, and in due obedience to all the laws of Christ, provided their civil liberties be secured, is proof against all the assaults of Rome. She is *built on a Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her*. On the other hand, a church, which grows remiss in her attention to the laws of her Divine Head; suffers gospel order, in the admission of her ministers and members to fall into dissuitude; and permits, without the application of gospel remedies, errors, and immoralities, to shed their poison among her members,--is become like a flock of Sheep, exposed in a defenceless wilderness, to the fury of Ravening Wolves. It may, perhaps, be

be a disagreeable truth to some, but faithfulness obliges me to proclaim it aloud, namely, that ever since a *supposititious* moderation, and a *blind, undistinguishing* charity, became so characteristical of all religious denominations in Britain, Popery has been making large strides toward us, till at last we seem to be without any visible defence. The Church of England, ambitious to court the good opinion of Rome, has imprudently retained, and obstinately maintained, the whole plan of Antichristian hierarchy, excepting its ghostly Head; and many of the whorish ceremonies of the Mother of Harlots. But has she succeeded in her earnest wishes? No; all the satisfaction she has, is, that many of her members, on account of the familiarity of her government and rites to those of Rome, are ready to embrace Popery, whenever it offers itself; and the Roman See, instead of becoming more charitable to her, is only thirsting to rob her of those shamefully extravagant ecclesiastic revenues, which, from the æra of the Reformation, she has retained, as a lure to the *Arch-Wolf* and his *Accomplices* in rapine. The several dissenting denominations, on the other hand, have been greatly falling off from the ancient zeal of their ancestors against the Popish hierarchy and ceremonies, retained in England. They have been gradually conforming, and voluntarily suffering themselves, to be caught in *the net spread for them in Tabor*, by the TEST ACT. But what fruit have they had in these things, of which they have now reason to be ashamed. Has the Church of England any better opinion of them than in the less supple age of a *Cartwright* or a *Bates*? No; their only reward is, to find themselves more despised by the Hierarchs of the church, whom they have been so anxious to please; to find the Dissenting Interest sensibly weakening in every

every new generation ; and to see the necks of their children, through the loose notions in which they have been educated, prepared to receive Popery, which they will readily view, as but only one remove from that, to which their fathers had confirmed.—On these accounts, it seems to be high time the churches in Britain should rouse themselves from their fatal slumbers, Their divine HEAD is crying—and our circumstances second the cry, *Remember from whence you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works, else I will come unto you quickly, and will remove your candlestick out of his place, except you repent.*

4. Finally, Civil Societies, Empires, Kingdoms and Common-wealths, ought to be on their guard against the Ravening Wolves of the apocalyptic wilderness*. We have already seen, what Wolves the Romish Clergy have been to Civil Societies. All Protestant nations have found it to be indispensibly necessary, on account of their dark intrigues, to secure their own constitutions, and the liberties of their subjects, by such laws as their own political situations rendered expedient. Our wise and provident ancestors, obliged by their horrid plots, and repeated rebellions, pursued that wise measure: And, till these causes, which prompted them to it, cease to operate, that is, till Popery cease to exist, till Popish priests cease to concern themselves in the affairs of nations, and till a Popish pretender cease to assert his claim to the throne of these realms, and be supported in it by the Roman See,—Legislators are under obligations to maintain these laws in their full vigour. When I say, *full vigour*, I mean not that they ought to be executed, unless the Papists themselves oblige the executive powers to it, by
fresh

fresh acts of rebellion. The caution in the text, implies not persecution. That is a sin in itself, inconsistent with the spirit of Christianity, and an outrage on God's moral government. Yet, the law of self-preservation obliges our legislature to provide, that those, who avow a right to persecute, should never have it in their power, to carry their pretended right into execution. Besides, when these legal fences decay, or when improvidence or corruption may have weakened or removed them, they ought to be speedily restored. Every member of the common-weal ought to contribute his share, without stepping out of his proper sphere. It is, without question, the business of the legislative powers to do it, *unsolicited*. But in case these may endanger the liberties and peace of the subjects, by neglect, it becomes the unquestionable duty of these last to make respectful suit to their legislators, to provide for their safety.—And that this is the duty of the people at large, at this time, when the wise law of our late *Deliverer*, William III. respecting Popery, has been hastily repealed, will appear from the following considerations.

1. God, by his own hand, wrought our deliverance from Popery, at the reformation; and hath many times delivered us since, when we had not more to fear from that intolerant superstition, than we have at this time. It must be, therefore, highly ungrateful to our God, to throw down these fences, by which our British liberties have been secured to us so long; and it would be still more ungrateful, silently to suffer them to lie in ruins, while our liberties, civil and religious, are exposed to the rapacious paws of Ravening Wolves. In consequence of the late act, the influence of Papists, in a not very distant election to parliament, co-operating with the all-powerful enchantments of French fines and Spanish

nish gold, may overturn the British constitution, set a Popish pretender on the throne, and place the Pope at the head of the established church.

2. Unless subjects of all Protestant denominations appear, at this time, in constitutional applications to the legislature, they virtually consent to all the merciless persecutions and Popish murders of our venerable ancestors. These shed their blood in rearing our Protestant mounds; and were we silently to sit still, and see them levelled, and a passage thereby opened for Popery, our doing so, would be justly interpreted to be a saying, that it was shed in vain. God did not punish with so much severity the murders of the Old-Testament martyrs, as he did those, who, by their actions, approved the horrid deeds! —*The blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world—from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, who perished between the altar and the temple, shall be required of this generation**.

3. We cannot acquit ourselves of the duty we owe posterity without doing it. It is in vain to slumber on, and say, it is not probable that Papists will hurt *us*, in our day. Were this selfish dream more probable than it is, are we sure, they will not, in consequence of the late act, hurt our descendants? Is there no probability, that our children or grandchildren may rise up, and curse our silly credulity, or our supine negligence, in parting with the pearl of liberty, purchased for us by the blood, and entailed on us by the care, of our fathers; and for bequeathing slavery of soul and body to them, as their only portion?

4. To petition Legislature at this time will be a convincing proof of our charity to our fellow christians.

tians, and even to all the Protestant world. Were Papists to obtain their wishes, in consequence of the late act, Britain ceases, from that moment, to have the honour she has enjoyed during two centuries,—the unrivalled honour, of being the only guardian, under providence, of the Protestant interest in Europe. Should that act remain unrepealed, the Protestant churches, on the continent, as well as ourselves, in all human probability, would deeply share in the consequences of it.

5. It is a duty which we owe the illustrious *Personage* on the British throne. It is well known that Papists are, from principle, enemies to him and his family. The race of *Stuart* is their idol. Sameness of religion, and gratitude for undergoing an exile so tedious and severe, merely for its attachment to Popery, unite to oblige them. If they say, if they even *swear*, the contrary, continuing Papists, they swear that they are the most ungrateful sinners out of hell. Yes, their *boasted* loyalty is mere pretence, as long as one of the abdicated family lives to receive their allegiance, and the future marks of their grateful attachment.

4 OC 58

I conclude with the words of *Mordecai* to Queen Esther; That if any professed Protestant refuse, at this time, to unite with his Protestant brethren in a dutiful supplication to the British Legislature, for a repeal of the late act in favour of Papists, they must not flatter themselves that *they shall escape more than all* their Petitioning brethren; *but if they altogether hold their peace at this time, enlargement and deliverance will arise from another place.* As for them, I shall leave them in the hand of HIM, who judgeth the profitable, and the unprofitable servant.

